



(U) Speak Easy: Game Day (repost)

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(U) Here's the finale of the "Speak Easy" public-speaking column. The entire text is unclassified.

Okay, so you've written your monologue and distilled it down. You've listed the salient points on a single sheet and printed enough copies to give one to each expected attendee. You've worn your best business attire. Now it's time to deliver.

Arrive at the location early - there will be things to do. You might have to get a key to open the room. The room might have been double booked (yes, this does happen!) and if so, you might have to post a note directing your customers to another room. You might realize that you forgot something and have to go back to your office for it.

Make sure all needed equipment is there, and working. For example, if you're showing PowerPoint slides, click through the entire sequence and check to see that they are readable on the projector screen.

Place your notes in the most convenient place. If there is no lectern available, then a table will do. This is why you printed them in **large font** (right?).

Wait for folks to arrive. Invariably a few will be late, so wait a few minutes after the scheduled start time to begin speaking. This might be a good time to distribute the take-away documentation in order to make sure people get it and to give them something to read while they're waiting.

It has been said that public speaking is the thing Americans fear most. So it's likely that the most difficult thing about giving your presentation will be nervousness. No advice will stop this. You will become less jittery after you've done this several times, but that first talk (and probably the next few) will make you wish the room had a beer fridge.

You could open with a joke in order to ease the tension. The problem is that not everyone has the same sense of humor. **You** will know you're joking, but will everyone else? It might be better to simply introduce yourself. The audience wants to know who you are and what your function is. So tell them. This is the one part of your presentation that you definitely won't need any notes for.

When you need your notes, just briefly glance at them; each bullet point should trigger your memory so that you'll be able to look up and speak at least a sentence without having to refer back to them.

Ask if there are any questions at the end. If it's a very large room or auditorium, repeat each question so everyone can hear it before answering it.

When there are no more questions, be sure to thank everyone for listening, and remind them to contact you if they have any more questions.

Congratulations! You're now a professional speaker!

(U) Editor's comment: Thanks to [REDACTED] for contributing this series!

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